THE

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Missionary Magazine,

AND

REPOSITORY

OF

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

FOR DECEMBER, 1803.

AN ABSTRACT OF THE ACCOUNT PUBLISHED BY THE SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE, OF THE PROGRESS OF THEIR MISSIONS IN THE EAST INDIES.

THE Rev. Mr. Gericke, in a letter dated Vepery, near Madras, October 9, 1800, states, that the difficulties he had been put to, in re-building Cuddalore Church, he had been enabled to surmount by means of the salary he had received from government, for attending the sick, and officiating at the Naval Hospital. For his services at the Naval Asylum, where the Admiral himself had often attended, he piously observes, they had been well rewarded by the attention paid to them.

At *Madras*, in the *Malabar* congregation, there had been baptized, during the year 1799, 26 children and 9 adults, and on Easter Day there had been 108 communicants. Besides Malabarians, there had been baptized 49 children, and 63 had communicated on Easter Day. Three converts had also been received from popery. At *Cuddalore*, *Negapatam*, *Pullicat*, *Samulcotta*, *and Jagemaikpooram*, there had been baptized in the same year 72 children and 7 adults.

Mr. Gericke, in another letter, dated February 7, 1801, expressed himself greatly rejoiced to learn that the society was endeavouring to provide another missionary, and it was his prayer that he might prove to be of a truly apostolical character. In the Southern countries, several new congregations had recently sprung up. At *Dindegal*, a chapel had been erected at the expence of the congregation; and at *Madura*, that populous capital, a chapel was about to be built. Mr. Gericke's advice to make *Satianaden*, the country priest, an itinerant teacher, had been attended with a particular blessing. Some hundreds had been instructed and baptized by him. But this blessing encreased his care and anxiety how to provide all these places with faithful labourers. To *Dindegal* a catechist had been sent to nurture the new congregation. For *Madura*, they had not yet found one. *Satianaden* was then at *Tanjore*, and was thence to go to *Mudalore*, where a number of families, who had been instructed by the catechists, were waiting to be baptized by him.

During the year 1800, Mr. Gericke remarks, that in the *Madras Malabar* congregation, 29 children and 5 adults had been baptized, and 143 had communicated on Easter Day; and of other nations, 37 children and 7 adults had been baptized, and 63 had communicated. At *Cuddalore*, *Negapatam*, *Velore*, *Arnee*, *Madura*, *Dindegal*, *Sadras*, and *Pullicat*, 63 children and 12 adults, had been baptized.

Mr. Gericke, in another letter, dated July 7, 1801, states, that he had been to *Tanjore*, to meet *Satianaden*, and to confer with him and the missionaries on the concerns of the mission. In the course of his journey, Mr. Gericke had stopped at *Tranquebar*, to confer with the brethren there, how best to provide for the institution they had so much at heart. On the capture of *Tranque-*

bar by the English, he returned to it, and went with them to the commandant, and delivered a statement concerning the mission. The answer sent by government was very favourable.

Mr. Gericke states, that the missionaries at *Tanjore* had been, and were still in trouble, through the rebellion in the South; that the congregations had suffered great afflictions; had been plundered, confined, and tortured; that some of the chapels had been destroyed, and the books burned; that many had been obliged to hide themselves in the woods, and that as yet they saw no end of their troubles.

Mr. Gericke enclosed a letter to the Society from *Serfogee Maha*, *Rajah* of *Tanjore*, of whom he adds, that "no son can have a greater regard for his father than this good *Hindoo* had for Mr. Swartz, and still has for his memory."

The Rajah's letter contains a request that the Society would erect a monument of marble in his capital, to be fixed to the pillar next to the pulpit from which he preached, to perpetuate the memory of Father *Swartz*, "and to manifest the great esteem I have for the character of that great and good man, and the gratitude I owe him, my father, my friend, the protector and guardian of my youth." "May you," he adds, "Honourable Sirs, ever be enabled to send to this country such missionaries as are like the late Rev. Mr. Swartz." With this request of the *Rajah*, the Society have thought proper to comply.

The Rev. Mr. *Pohle*, in a letter dated Trichinapolly, 16th February, 1801, states, that having been in indifferent health, he had had the kind assistance of the Rev. Mr. Ball, at the Garrison, and his Catechists had officiated in the *Malabar* and *Portugueze* congregations. When unable to leave home himself, his Catechists had been more frequent in their visits to the natives round the coun-

try, and several heathens instructed by them, had been baptized by *Satianaden* the *Tanjore* country priest, who had performed all ministerial acts among the Christians of those parts. During the year 1800, 52, including 9 adults, had been baptized by him and *Satianaden*; 9 had been received from popery, and 124 persons had communicated. In the *English* school were 50 scholars, in the *Malabar* 15. The *Malabar* congregation consisted of 231, the *Portugueze* of 60: at *Dindegal* the *Malabarians* and *Portugueze* together made upwards of 70. Mr. *Pohle* expressed his gratitude to God, for all the mercies they had experienced, and particularly for the enjoyment of peace amidst surrounding war.

The Rev. Messrs. Kolhoff and Holzberg, in a letter, dated at Tanjore, 13 March, 1801, lament the loss sustained by the death of M. Jœnicke; and they sensibly feel the laborious charge of attending congregations 250 miles from *Tanjore*, which are also encreasing more and more. *Satianaden* had at Madura, Dindegal, and other places, diligently sowed the good seed of the word of God, and the divine blessing had attended his labours. Besides attending to their local duties, they had themselves made several journies westward, visiting the Christians in different places, whom they catechised and instructed in all the saving truths of the Gospel: and embracing all opportunities of conversing with the Heathens, to convince them of their errors. At *Buddalore*, 12 miles west of *Tanjore*, where there is a numerous congregation, they had erected a house of prayer, sufficient to contain near 300 persons. *Dawasagayam*, an able and faithful Catechist, was stationed there, and they had appointed one of the Seminarists to assist him. In the course of the year, they had received several visits from the brethren at Tranquebar, Messrs. John and Crammerer, and

had received much comfort and edification from them. The encrease of the congregation in 1800, was as follows. 46 children baptized, 94 heathens properly instructed and baptized, and 17 converts from the Romish communion. The four schools were continued. In the *Malabar* school were 162 children, consisting of 18 Seminarists, 55 out-scholars, 45 boys maintained by the mission, and 44 girls. In the *English* school, were 10 boys; and in the schools at Tanjore and Cumbagonam, 40. The Lord's Supper had been administered to 325 persons.

The Rev. the *Danish* Missionaries, in a letter, dated at Tranquebar, 22 February, 1801, state, that amidst some distressing circumstances, they had not been without others tending to produce that rejoicing in the Lord which furnished support under calamities. Not only the Rajah of *Tanjore*, and the Resident, Mr. *Torin*, had shewn very kind dispositions towards them, but the Collector Mr. *Harris*, had furnished some much wanted accommodations to the country Catechists, and had likewise published an order that the Christians might not again be prevented from attending on Sundays upon divine service, nor be molested in any respect, on account of their religion: nor be forced to assist at heathen feasts and in heathen cerimonies.

During the year 1800, in the *Tranquebar* mission, 21 Heathens, including 2 Caffries and 2 Malays, and 161 children born in the congregation, had been baptized. The communicants were 1115, the school children 200.

From the Society's report, it further appears, that the number of children in the Charity Schools under the Society's patronage, in and about London, amounts to 7108, viz. 4180 boys, 3928 girls; and that since the sitting up of the schools, 42330 boys and 20399 girls have been put out to appren-

ticeships and services, or taken from school by their friends.

It is also stated, that during the year 1801, the following books were distributed by the Society, viz. 7291 Bibles, 9958 New Testaments and Psalters, 12895 Common Prayers, 14710 other bound books, and 96354 small tracts.

FROM THE CHRISTIAN OBSERVER.

A SECT OF WHICH NO ACCOUNT IS TO BE FOUND IN ANY ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORIAN.

ALTHOUGH a pious reader of church history must be grieved to see into what a multitude of different sects the Christian world is divided, it may, nevertheless, be a pleasure to know, that there is one in existence of which those memorials give no account; it being a sect of so peculiar a character as to be inimical to all sectarianism, though utterly averse to intolerance. The first of these circumstances constitutes so essential a part of its character, that I can think of no better term by which the persons here intended may be described, than the following title,

THE ANTI-SECTARIAN SECT.

It should be observed here, that if it be necessary that they have a distinguishing name, *we* must give it to them; they themselves have assumed none. They are perfectly satisfied with that name which was given to the followers of Jesus, some hundreds of years ago, at a place called Antioch*. In that name they glory; and they wish that the disciples of their master had never been known by any other title than that of CHRISTIANS.

They lament the division into which the Christian Church is now rent. They consider them as having sprung as much from the depravity as

* See the Acts of the Apostles, chap. xi. 26.

from the infirmities, of human nature; from a haughtiness of requisition in those who had acquired power; an unreasonable scrupulosity in those who were required to submit; or the wayward disposition of fantastical and untractable minds. From such sources do they consider that humiliating fact to have proceeded, which the infidel often brings forward with no little triumph—the divided state of the Christian world.

Greatly would they rejoice to see the church on earth resemble that which is in heaven, in unity as well as in holiness: but they have no hope, at this late period of the world, of reducing all its members to one model. They conceive that a more practicable duty is incumbent on Christians; namely, the exercise of that forbearance, candour, and brotherly love, towards those who differ from them, so repeatedly and so forcibly inculcated in the New Testament.

I am describing a people who hold all opinions alike important. There is an undefinable class of men called Latitudinarians, whom, perhaps, the reader may conceive to be the persons here described. To obviate such a mistake, I should apprise him, that the *Antisectarian* differs totally from these. They seem to be indifferent to some truths that are essential to Christianity. He is zealous of them. He may resemble them in his temperate conduct, with respect to the mode in which Christianity is expressed; but he is far from being indifferent to the thing itself; on the contrary, he has it greatly at heart. Though he would not force you to shew your *repentance towards God*, or to express your *faith in Christ*, or to offer up your prayers to the Almighty under precisely the same external circumstances with himself; yet, that you be a penitent, that you have faith in Christ, that you pray daily to God, that you endeavour to live to his glory, are with him matters of infinite con-

sequence, which he earnestly desires to take place in your case, because he considers them as the only ground of hope in his own.

The people of the *Antisectarian sect* have not formed themselves into a distinct society, but are distributed through various classes of Christians. It may be doubted on this account, whether they can, in strict propriety, be called a sect; and, indeed, it would be very difficult to maintain the affirmative of this question, if the following reasons be not deemed sufficient; namely the distinguished rank in which they hold the *vital* principles of Christianity---their averseness to claim to themselves exclusively the honour of being considered as true Christians---and their consequent readiness to allow this honour to many who differ from them in some circumstantial points of religion----not deeming these of equal consequence with its essential qualities, but accounting that man the best Christian, though a member of a church less pure than they conceived their own to be, who excels in the faith, the charity, the humility, which belong to the character: And with respect to such of the Antisectarians, as belong to the Church of England, I have found them capable of acknowledging and honouring the piety found among Dissenters, without the least diminution of attachment to the constitution of their own Church, for which they are particularly thankful to God, as conceiving it to be peculiarly adapted to forward the great purposes of the Christian Revelation. In short, they pity the man, whether within or without their society, who is shut up within his own community, and never looks with an enlarged mind and benevolent heart beyond the contracted circle of those, with whom he agrees in the circumstantials of religion.

They take an interest in the welfare of every society which professes the Christian name, and, as

opportunities present themselves, are ready to promote the edification of its members; their object, however, not being so much to proselyte them to their own communion, as to reanimate them, by exciting attention to the vital truths of Christianity. In the ardour with which they desire to see this end accomplished, they can rejoice to hear of any writer or preacher in another Church, whose heart is evidently alive to the eternal interests of the community to which he belongs, and who labours not so much to enlarge the size of that body, as to increase its spirituality: and should his efforts occasionally discover a taint of undue predilection for what is peculiar to his own Church, they forgive it; seeing that the governing motive is the promotion of genuine piety. Thus with a rooted aversion to popery, which they consider as the grand apostacy foretold in the scriptures, they regard the writings of some of its adherents, as having a happy tendency to promote the life of religion in the soul, and they are, therefore, ready to aid the circulation of such writings in that community for which they were immediately intended.

If they publish any work of their own with a view to ameliorate the views and conduct of the members of other churches, they can leave untouched less essential points of difference; and content themselves with seizing on admitted truths of prime importance, in order to convey, through that channel, such arguments or exhortations as tend to the spiritual improvement of those at whose benefit they aim.

In their own community they are not always spending their strength on those topics which tend to increase the bitterness of party zeal. If, indeed, the occasion demand it, they are ready to produce a meek and manly defence of the doctrine or worship of that church to which they belong; but they are generally employed in urging upon all,

those points which are of perpetual and indispensable necessity, and without which there can be no salvation to any man, however unexceptionable his Church may be.

Their minds are too much occupied about great truths to be influenced by little circumstances, and this preserves them from the spirit of innovation. They are averse to minute or unimportant alterations, even though, in themselves considered, they should be improvements ; lest prejudice being thereby awakened, more should be lost than gained. Knowing that they have opposition enough to contend with in the aversion of human nature to the essentials of religion, they wish to reserve themselves for that necessary combat, without making any diversion of their force to objects of comparative insignificance. This caution they think incumbent upon them at all times, but especially when there appears a tendency towards a dereliction of the essential doctrines of the gospel. They account it unwise to urge inferior points, when those of superior importance are at hazard.

Another thing which prevents them from innovating in religion, is their dread of schism. They would not break the unity of the Church, by attempting to alter that order of things, which, though not perfect, may yet be retained without endangering or impeding the salvation of men ; and they are fully aware, how much the magnifying of trivial circumstances tends to alienate men's minds from ancient establishments of tried utility, to induce a tenaciousness on such points, and thereby to form separatists. Holding schism to be a great and ruinous evil, they take care that they do not by such a conduct, indirectly contribute to it.

And not only do they guard against sectarianism by their conduct, with respect to things of small importance, but even by the manner in which they

enforce truths of the highest consequence. If some essential point of Christian doctrine be neglected, their love to God, and their love to man, both require them strenuously to assert and maintain that doctrine. But while discharging this duty, they are careful not to let their zeal betray them into any thing which may be the occasion of sectarianism, or be fairly interpreted as a proof of a sectarian intention. If the doctrine in question be fallen too low, they conceive it to be their bounden duty to raise it to its proper place, but no higher. To elevate it above that point, to urge it with a zeal which tends to obscure other revealed truths, and to lead men to suppose that religion consists merely in being right on that article, is the business of a sectarian, not of an *Antisectarian.*

Further, they are careful lest they should inadvertently forward the intentions of sectarians. If in concurring with a member of any other Christian society, for the purpose of furthering the propagation of genuine Christianity, they perceive, that under a profession of this catholic intention, their associate is after all only availing himself of the connection to increase the numbers or consequence of his own sect, they withdraw from him. They did not associate for any such purpose, nor will they aid such a scheme with the assistance of one of their fingers.

Among sectarian tendencies, they reckon that too forward disposition in some persons to emblazon every good action, or character, which happens to appear within their own circle. They are sparing of panegyric, because, even where there is much to commend, the subject is still a frail creature, who stands in great need of God's forgiveness. They judge it more conformable to the genius of Christianity, that religious men should remember, as well when speaking of one another as when speaking of themselves, how much more

their lives fall short of the full measure of their obligations, than they rise above the ordinary level of general practice. This moderation they particularly observe with respect to such as they have been known to assimilate with in opinion and conduct. If a good action be done, or a good life have been exhibited, within their own circle, they do not call all the world to admire it, as if they alone were the people among whom human excellence was to be found. Such a conduct may answer the views of a party ; but they have a nobler design ; it is religion, not any particular class of religious men, which they wish to see held in high esteem. It is true Christianity, therefore, to which they endeavour to direct the eyes of men, and as its advancement is their predominant desire, they think it necessary to avoid all imputation of having another end to serve, the suspicion of which might impede or defeat them in their grand pursuit.

Having this object steadily in view, simplicity is one of their characteristics. They will have no jargon in their language. They make a point of discarding all cant terms, and are averse to Shibboleths. They likewise guard against pushing things to extremity. What the Holy Scriptures plainly teach, they hold fast ; but are fearful of refining upon general truths, lest they should go farther than their guide will accompany them. This caution prevents their embarrassing themselves and others with minute objections and frivolous distinctions ; evils of which they are so much afraid, that they keep a guard on their conversation before their children, in order to avoid the error of those religionists, whose quibbling table-talk tends to form a race of quibbling and fastidious objectors, rather than of humble and simple hearted Christians, who can discern and relish the substance of religion.

It only remains, that I obviate a suspicion which the above account may possibly have generated in some minds. It may be thought, that as the predominant object with the Antisectarians is the life of religion, they hold in contempt all that relates to its forms. This, however, is as much sectarianism as any thing else which may have acquired that name. They are free from it. They consider that to obtain the ends and purposes of Christianity, it is necessary that it have some form, and that the argument respecting its form is therefore an argument of great consequence; that from being unquestionably preferable, which is best calculated, all things considered, to accomplish the purposes of the Christian Revelation, while it is most consonant to the apostolic institutions. They think it of great importance that men should be attentive to the forms of religion. They themselves reverence those forms, as things pertaining to God; and have it much at heart, that they should be so administered and supported, as to give them the greatest possible efficiency as means of bringing men to God.

In short, it is their constant aim to watch over themselves and others, with respect to the WHOLE of Christianity. It is their earnest desire, that no part of it be neglected: and if they seem, at any time, more attentive to one part than to another, it is because that particular part may be lost sight of. According to the nature of the prevailing defection in religion, do they vary the direction of their zeal. Sometimes they are particularly attentive to articles of faith, sometimes to moral duties, sometimes to the power of religion, sometimes to its form, according as they perceive a disposition to neglect any part of that beautiful whole, the entireness of which, like an unbroken chain, they consider it their duty to preserve.

And as they are zealous that every part of this whole may be preserved, they likewise desire to adhere to every part with equal fidelity; so that there shall be no partialities in their religion, nothing that is disproportionately prominent, nothing thrown back which revelation brings forward. The selection of favorite points is, in their view, a departure from the simplicity of faith. They will be of no school, but that in which Christ presides; and to all the dictates of their divine master, they desire to pay an equal attention.

VIATOR.

FROM THE NEW-JERSEY GAZETTE.

DEISM.

Read and revere the sacred page, a page
Where triumphs immortality: a page
Which not the whole creation could produce,
Which not the conflagration shall destroy;
'Tis printed in the minds of Gods forever;
In nature's ruins not one letter lost.....YOUNG.

DID you ever see a man, courteous reader, arrogating to himself the title of philosopher and of a profound thinker, who could not even give a definition of philosophy, nor ever had a serious thought in his life? A man who, with little wit, and much self-conceit, was constantly retailing scraps and shreds from Tolland and Tindal, and glorying in the wretched sophistry of those superficial reasoners against the authenticity of the sacred scriptures, but who had never so much as looked into Leland, a celebrated and philosophical divine, who had solidly confuted both?

Have you ever seen a man who ridiculed all faith and all mystery, and expected to obtain eternal felicity by practising morality dictated by the light of nature, acknowledging at the same time his belief of the greatest absurdities in the world; and practising no more morality than a horse? A man pretending to the acutest penetration and judgment;

and yet not knowing how to doubt where he ought; to rest assured where he ought; and to submit where he ought?

Did you ever see a man who averred that the bare light of nature was sufficient (and revelation consequently unnecessary) to conduct us at present in the path of duty, and to everlasting happiness hereafter; and in the same breath confessing, that, notwithstanding this light (luminous and brilliant as he made it) a very great part of the world that has no other guide, is this moment involved in pagan superstition and idolatry?

Did you ever see a man who denied the miracles wrought by Jesus Christ, though proved by a cloud of witnesses who sealed their testimony with their blood; and yet affecting to believe the fabulous wonders of Apolsonius of Tyana, upon the credit of Philostratus, who has written a silly romance about that astrologer, which was never believed by any save by those who believe every thing but what is true?

Did you ever see a man who resolved all the moral attributes of the Deity into that of mercy; and this mercy into a connivance at sin, and the virtual abolition of his laws?

Did you ever see a man who flattered himself that the precepts, the morality and the history of our holy religion; the wonderful and unparalleled life and death of its author; the wisdom and sanctity of its injunctions; the authority and sublimity of the sacred writings; the testimony of occular witnesses; the blood of so many martyrs; the accomplishment of so many prophecies; the attestation of so many miracles; the tradition of so many ages; the conversion of so great a part of the world to a religion renouncing the world, and propagated not only without, but against external force; the perpetuity of the faith through a perpetuity of the most bloody persecutions; the impregnable foundation

of the church; and all the proofs in support of christianity, are answered and confuted, or rather totally annihilated by the unphilosophical philosophy of a Bolingbroke, or the wretched pun or threadbare jest of a Voltaire, or a Rousseau?

Did you ever see a man who had the assurance to tell you, that our belief in the divine origin of the scriptures is wholly to be ascribed to the force of education, and the early illusions of the priest and the nurse; but that all men of unfettered uninfluenced sentiments, all philosophers and reasoners, have ever esteemed revelation as imposture; and this man at the same time confessing that sir Isaac Newton, and Mr. Locke, and Lord Bacon, sir Robert Boyle, and Grotius, and Boerhave, and Littleton, and West, and Pascal, and Penn, and Barclay and Phipps, were christians, after the most impartial scrutiny, and the most assiduous investigation of the evidences by which revelation is supported?

Did you ever see a man who denied the possibility of miracles, and yet demanded a constant series and uninterrupted succession of them, to prove a divine mission?

Have you ever seen a man who reproached religion with all the horrors of persecution, and the fanaticism of the most sanguinary zealots, and yet acknowledging that these excesses were the evident abuses of christianity; and directly repugnant to the peaceable spirit of the gospel, and the notorious inhibitions of its illustrious founder?

Did you ever see a man unable by the light of reason to reconcile the blemishes in the natural, and the disorders in the moral, world, with the idea of an all-wise and all-good governor of the universe—some regions for instance, almost deprived of the heat of the sun, others scorched by its insupportable splendor, winds, tempests, and earthquakes, volcanoes and inundations threaten-

ing universal destruction ; the ocean overflowing the greatest part of the globe ; and an immense quantity of its *terra firma* covered with rocks and mountains, and deserts of sand, incapable of cultivation ; nor apparently formed for the sustenance of man or beast—and this same man able, by revelation to reconcile all this ; and yet scorning by revelation to do it ?

Respecting the moral world—have you ever seen a man unable to account, by the light of reason, how a Being infinitely good and infinitely powerful, should permit sin (which from the purity of his nature he must abhor, and by his omnipotence can certainly prevent) not only to enter into the world, but to be more prevalent in it than virtue —Why he should suffer injustice and tyranny to reign uncontrouled ; oppression and violence to be successful and triumph over prostrate virtue and innocence ; humility to be confounded ; and piety to wander in penury and rags—and able by revelation, to account for all this, and yet scorning by revelation to solve those, otherwise inexplicable difficulties ?

Did you ever see a man, who unable by the light of reason to account for the composition of his own species, as at the same time *material* and *thinking* beings, while it is confessedly of the essence of matter to be incompatible with thought—equally unable to account for the double nature in man—his general propensity to vice, and his insuperable veneration for virtue—his *video meliora, proboque*, and his *deteriora sequor*—his unconquerable moral depravity, and the remaining splendid fragments of his primæval lustre ; and able by revelation to account for all this ; and yet scorning by revelation to do it ?

Have you ever seen a man, who, unable to prove, by the light of reason, the immortality of the soul, or that, from that intimate union between

the operations of the soul and those of the body, the latter ceasing, the former will not terminate; —and able, by revelation, which *hath brought immortality to light*, to prove his eternal duration; and yet scorning by revelation to prove it?

Did you ever see a man who, unable by the light of reason to account for his own hopes of immortal happiness, from the absolute impossibility of reconciling, by the help of that light, the immutable justice of the Supreme Legislator, with the impunity of the transgressors of his laws, (for as to the attribute of mercy, it is indubitably borrowed from revelation; and in the hands of those miserable reasoners, most miserably perverted) and who by revelation could account for it; and yet scorning thus to solve this, otherwise inscrutable, ænigma?

Have you ever seen such a man, sir——Why then you have seen a——BLOCKHEAD.

Let all the heathen writers join,
To form one perfect book,
Great GOD, if once compar'd with thine,
How mean their writings look!
Not the moſt perfect rules they gave
Could shew one sin forgiven,
Or lead a step beyond the grave,
But thine conduct to heaven.....Dr. WATTS.

HORTENSIUS.

FROM THE BIBLICAL MAGAZINE.

QUERY ON POPERY AND MODERN INFIDELITY.

Mr. Editor,

IN the year 1793, soon after the French Revolution, I made the following extract from one of our popular Reviews, the propriety of which I beg leave to submit to your intelligent readers and correspondents.

"Infidelity (they say) is the necessary consequence of the imposition of an intolerant superſti-

tion on mankind. They are taught to consider this absurd nonsense as the religion of Christ; and having neither opportunity nor encouragement to enquire into the nature of the gospel, it cannot be surprising that they should reject with aversion and contempt, what is so obviously inconsistent with reason, and really so contrary to true religion that if our choice were confined to either Popery or Deism, we should without hesitation, *prefer the latter*, as infinitely less dishonourable to God, and less prejudicial to the happiness of mankind."

I do not know, Mr. Editor, that this is a wrong conclusion: but it appears to me a question of some difficulty, Whether Deism or Popery be less favourable to the spread of the gospel; and I should be happy to see it fairly investigated. The able writer alluded to in p. 48 of your last Number, if I mistake not, is of a different opinion from the Reviewers above quoted, and seems to have considered the late downfal of the Roman church as one of the malignant effects of modern Infidelity.

ZENAS.

REMARKS ON THE QUERY

WHETHER DEISM OR POPERY BE LESS FAVOURABLE TO THE SPREAD OF THE GOSPEL?

Mr. Editor,

IF the following brief remarks on the query proposed by your correspondent, "Zenas," should not have been superseded, I submit them to your consideration. Far from attempting an *answer* to it, my only aim is to offer some reflections on the subject, which may lead to a farther investigation.

I am disposed to admit the general sentiment contained in the extract adduced by your correspondent, though, in some particular instances, I conceive that the writer has expressed himself too strongly. When it is asserted, that, "infidelity

is the *necessary* consequence of superstition," might it not with greater propriety be considered as a *natural* consequence, rather than a *necessary* one? None can deny that the human mind is prone to extremes; that it is a frequent effect of an oppressive and intolerant superstition, to force its enslaved votaries to the contrary excess; and that a transition from the desolate wilds of popish ignorance and bigotry to what they are ready to deem the fairy regions of liberty and infidelity, is natural and easy: but is this sufficient to prove it "a necessary consequence?" The same objection, I conceive, lies against the conclusion of the sentence alluded to: "We should without hesitation prefer the latter, as infinitely less dishonourable to God," &c.

But with respect to the general question, *Whether Deism or Popery be less favourable to the spread of the Gospel;* permit me to ask,

(1.) Is not the increase of knowledge favourable to the interests of religion?—Facts, obvious and plain, the experience of many ages, are sufficient to prove that there has been a uniform connection between the progress of science, and that of religion. Where had christianity at first a freer course, than in those cities of Asia where learning had long held her seat? When did that glorious æra, the Reformation from popery arise, but at that period in which the thick darkness, which had for many ages pervaded Europe, was chased away, and followed by a revival of letters? I do not mean to insinuate that the utmost efforts of science can produce such an effect: but that God has in general made use of this instrument for the propagation of the gospel. Upon this ground may we not, on the whole, prefer the reign of infidelity to that of popery? It is true indeed that much cannot be said in favour of the literary attainments of modern infidels: yet probably they far exceed those

of catholic countries. The comparative view of France, either with its former condition, or the present state of Spain and Portugal, will surely demonstrate that infidelity is more favourable to the interests of science, and philosophical researches, than the midnight of superstitious ignorance. If the connection between science and religion be established, does it not follow, that any system which admits of investigation, is preferable to that which invokes ignorance as a tutelar deity, and which accounts every higher step of wisdom a greater degree of sin ?

(2.) Is not the individual more in the way of information, and in the road to truth, who is impelled by a restless sceptical disposition to examine subjects, than he who is fettered and pinioned ; neither daring to think, read, or enquire for himself?—It is true, the reasonings of infidels (if such they may be called) betray no small degree of that blinding prejudice which they charge upon others. Bring forward a truth in natural religion ; urge it on the ground of reason, and they admit it ; produce a scriptural argument in its favour, support it by a body of evidence equally strong, and they reject it with a sneer. This, it must be granted, is a considerable obstacle to their discovery of truth : yet there appears to be much more reason to hope in such a case, than in that of an infatuated papist. The latter, fully content with the few ideas which his priest or confessor chooses to impart, seeks no farther : he rests contented with his advice and instructions, nor feels a religious want besides. On the contrary, the restless sceptic is hunting after every new scheme : to-day he embraces a theory, to-morrow rejects it for one more novel ; and is ever tossed about by the winds and waves of metaphysical speculation, and newly invented hypotheses. Dreadful as such a condition may be, is there not a hope that amidst all

these fluctuations he may be directed to the temple of truth, and pay his adoration there? Which of the two is nearer the haven of christianity? He who has not left the port of ignorance, but remains there at anchor; or he who, with whatever intent, has set sail, and launches into the ocean of doubt? Who can tell but some propitious gale may force him, against his inclinations, into the fair haven?

(3.) To appeal to facts: Does it not appear that this reign of infidelity has been the means which God has used, to open a door of entrance which would have been sought in vain while the popish hierarchy retained its force?—We have had the pleasing intelligence of a willingness on the part of many in France to receive the sacred scriptures, and to assist in dispersing them. The fair prospect seems to be opening upon us, which will discover the bible in every family, if not in every hand, throughout that widely extended and populous republic. Not many years back, when France was overrun with priests of every order, when the throne of the Beast appeared fixed and immoveable, had a similar attempt been made to introduce the sacred oracles, what would have been the probable issue? There is reason to apprehend that the solitary individuals who should have engaged in so dangerous an expedition, would either have been arrested and imprisoned under the authority of *lettres de cachet*, or delivered up to the fury of a bigotted and deluded populace.

There is one additional circumstance which may deserve consideration, in taking a comparitive view of the two systems; viz. that the infidel in the hour of affliction has no substitute for real religion, but finds himself wholly destitute. There is something in the religious ceremonies of popery on which the troubled mind may rest with some appearance of security. Having frequently counted his beads, received the eucharist, extreme unc-

tion, and final absolution ; he may feel a calm submission, and preparation either for life or death. This is some kind of substitute for the consolations of genuine religion, though highly delusive ; but what has the infidel to rely on ? He feels his false hope and confidence giving way, is forceably driven from his hold, and has nothing left but black despair ; or, through the grace of God, humiliation and repentance. If, as our Lord said of the pharisees, " publicans and harlots shall enter into the kingdom of God before them ;" may we not say of the self-righteous papists, ' Deists and infidels are nearer the kingdom of heaven than they ?"

M. S. S.

DEISM AND POPERY COMPARED.

Mr. Editor,

THE remarks of M. S. S. lead to a solution of Zenas's query, so different from that which I expected from any of your correspondents, that I cannot refrain from requesting your readers seriously to examine the arguments on which it is founded, before they adopt the same conclusion. The very terms of the query may reasonably suggest some alarm to the serious believer in christianity. What is Deism ? A total rejection of revealed religion. What is Popery ? A reception not only of the scriptures as a divine revelation, but of the leading doctrines contained in them, as understood by us ; namely, the Trinity, the attonement of Christ, and the work of the holy Spirit ; mingled, doubtless, with gross superstition, and debased by much alloy of human inventions. If the question was stated, with the substitution of these definitions, or others, of whatever kind, that expressed the fact, instead of the terms " Deism" and " Popery," I think it would either afford its own answer, or would appear unintelligible. It is

indeed difficult to conceive how a total rejection of christianity can be compared with a zealous, though erroneous profession of it, as tending to impede the propagation of christianity. Our popular reviews have so long, and so notoriously, been employed to subvert the leading truths of the gospel, and even the inspiration of the scriptures, that it is not at all strange for *them* to prefer deism to popery, or to christianity in *any* mode. Your correspondent M. S. S. very justly objects to the expressions which Zenas cited from the reviewers; but he has, I think, unhappily adopted the very conclusion which they wished to establish. With *their* principles such a decision was perfectly consistent; but I hope better both of Zenas and M. S. S. than to suppose them enemies of christianity in disguise. I have hinted the absurdity which appears to me to be involved in the query proposed by the former. Let me proceed to examine the arguments by which the latter endeavours to prove that popery is less favourable to the spread of the gospel than deism.

He asks first: "Is not the increase of knowledge favourable to the interests of religion?" He means by *knowledge*, scientific and philosophical research, which (although when sanctified, it is certainly useful to the illustration of the scriptures) has nevertheless usually been perverted to a directly contrary purpose. M. S. S. himself betrays this fact, powerfully as it opposes his own argument. Why does he ask this question, if infidelity, and what he terms "the increase of knowledge" are not generally united? And are we to imagine that what commonly accompanies infidelity is favourable to the interests of religion? His assertion that obvious and plain facts prove, notwithstanding, such a paradox, I beg your leave to deny *in toto*. He asks, "Where had christianity at first a freer course, than in those cities of Asia

where learning had long held her seat?" M. S. S. acted wisely in confining his enquiries to *Asia*. He did not choose to follow Paul to Athens, the philosophical metropolis of the known world. Yet, surely this would have been the most proper tribunal to decide the question. The scripture intimates, and ecclesiastical history explains the fact, that christianity never flourished in that emporium of science and philosophy. Let us, however, return to Asia. If M. S. S. be acquainted with the history of ancient science, he must know that Tarsus was considered as more eminent for science than any city except Athens: but we hear little of the success of the gospel at that place, though abundantly favoured with the ministry of Paul. It was at Ephesus, the grand mart of superstition; at Corinth, the centre of traffic and voluptuousness; at Rome, the seat of despotism, that the gospel chiefly flourished: not that these were favourable scenes of missionary labour, otherwise than by their population; but the evils that prevailed in them were not so great impediments to the progress of the gospel, as the science and philosophy of Athens and of Tarsus were demonstrated to be.

In appealing to the period of the reformation, M. S. S. seems to have a greater advantage than in his citation of the primitive age: but I must observe first, That this argument relates not immediately to the spread of christianity, but to its emancipation from superstitious prejudices; and secondly, That the learning in vogue at that period was rather grammatical, than scientific or philosophical. That literature, properly so called, when used in subservience to revealed truth, is adapted to the correction of errors in religion, I am not at all inclined to dispute: but when connected with deism, as the argument requires us to consider it, it has in all ages and circumstances

proved the most insuperable impediment to the progress of the gospel. The sacred scriptures teach us to expect this. "Not many wise are called:" The doctrine of Christ was "to the Greeks foolishness."

Your correspondent's second enquiry suggests, that persons of a "restless, sceptical disposition" are impelled "to examine subjects," and are therefore "in the road to truth." The reverse appears to me to be the fact. No class of persons have demonstrated themselves so much indisposed to examine the evidences or the doctrines of the gospel, as the sceptical philosophers of the present and past ages. Witness, Thomas Paine, Volney, Voltaire, &c. They are therefore, I apprehend, incomparably more out of "the way of information," than the serious papist, who, under a concern for salvation, and a consciousness of his own ignorance, is thankful for the little he obtains from his priest.

But, thirdly: Your correspondent triumphantly appeals to the facts which have resulted from the French revolution. With these, however, he seems to me to be as imperfectly acquainted as with any which preceded. He does not seem to know that infidelity is no longer fashionable in France, or that while it was so, it was impracticable to spread the gospel under any form whatever. In Robespiere's time, every christian minister, papist, or protestant, conformist, or nonconformist, was thrown into prison. The methodists attempted preaching there in vain. It is only since the restoration of popery, that any opening has been afforded to the gospel, and popish priests have encouraged it.

Your correspondent's last argument is deduced from the improbability of an infidel in affliction, or at death, being able to buoy himself up with any substitute for the gospel. But how numerous

and striking are the facts which prove the contrary! Not to mention Lord Herbert, Rousseau, and Hume, how many of the revolutionary heroes of France retained their philosophic security at the guillotine!

By this time, I hope, Mr. Editor, that your readers will be convinced of the absurdity of forming a coalition with the avowed enemies of christianity, against any party of fellow-christians, however erroneous. The popish party have usually opposed the progress of other religious parties with great bigotry and violence. It is to be lamented that the various parties of protestants, when possessed of the power, have betrayed a similar disposition. It is also to be regretted that they have, till very lately, shewn much less zeal to spread what *they* consider as the gospel, than papists have done. May they esteem and imitate what is good in papists, and avoid what is evil: and may they be duly on their guard against that philosophical scepticism, which is "a root of every evil!"

CORNELIUS.

PROSPECTS OF THE STATE OF RELIGION ABROAD.

[Concluded.]

IN Germany, the aspect of religion is undoubtedly more favourable than it was before the convulsions of the French revolution. Before that frightful, but instructive period, the character of the princes, the labours of the sophists, the effusions of the poets, the temper of the universities, the prejudices of the people, were all hostile, not only to sound principles and pure morals, but even to genuine philosophy, solid learning, and good taste. These fatal sources of corruption, though in part checked, are by no means radically removed. One great cause of error in opinion, and laxity in

practice, among even the Protestant clergy of Germany, sprung from the same origin which engendered most of the heresies of the first ages of Christianity. It was the pride of reason, the affectation or the prejudice of a false philosophy. Right reason, genuine wisdom, happily accord with pure religion; and, in the Scriptures themselves, are employed as synonymous terms. The minds of a Socrates, or a Newton, would readily have been impelled to revere the doctrines of the gospel; and, in favourable circumstances, might have been led to display their power. The minds of modern sophists exhibit very different tempers, as well as talents. The system of what is called speculative, or metaphysical philosophy, form, at best, but a series of romances. When these involve no pernicious principles, and lead to no dangerous practice, they may be regarded as innocuous in themselves, or amusing exercises to the human understanding: But unhappily, like other romances, they are prone to engross too much the mind, disturb the imagination, and agitate the passions. When their principles are false, and their tendency pernicious, their effects must prove still more fatally destructive. Such have been the character and effects of many modern speculations of pretended philosophy. In Germany, systems and theories, called philosophical, often of extreme absurdity, inconsistencies, or contrariety, have succeeded each other with amazing rapidity. The spirit of sophistry, the arrogance of dogmatism, or propensities to sceptism have thus been wickedly fostered. It was the fashion for princes and subjects to affect to be philosophers. The clergy, forgetting the dignity of their offices, the immutable sanctity of religion, and firm features of divine truth, yield to the same infatuation. To please speculating princes, to accommodate themselves to sophisticated universities, or to indulge the natu-

ral pride of the human mind, many of them affected to be philosophical preachers. As the philosophy of the day was so perverted or pernicious, it may easily be conceived how foul was the taint of its impression on the features of their sermons, and the spirit of their character. In the ministrations of religion, nothing can be so absurd as this affectation of philosophy, even where the system adopted is otherwise inoffensive. Abstract metaphysics, or researches in their proper place, may amuse inquisitive and studious minds: But metaphysical sermons, affected speculative discussions are the scorn of the wise, an insult to the hearers, and a mockery of religion. When philosophy attempts to graft its theories upon religion, heresy, absurdity and delusion will appear as the fruits. In Germany, the desire to accommodate religion to the philosophy of the day, at one time, seemed to have defaced from the discourses of the clergy, in many places, every vestige and feature of the gospel of Christ. The sophists themselves laugh at such philosophising divines, the people desert them in hopeless indifference, they are left to brood in their swelling imaginations over the solace of their cold dreams; and religion, like a blasted tree, seems to wither at their touch. In Germany, the tendency of such infatuation is now, in part, perceived even in courts and universities: In the country, and among the people, it never was so widely spread. Even the more formidable alarms which have been excited from the pernicious projects of masonic conspirators, illuminati, and confederated sophists, have only been confined to a narrow circle, though intended to diffuse ruin and convulsions to the widest range. Happily, the projects are unknown, and the poison untasted, through the great mass of the people. Happily, through the good providence of God, we can now

hail more favourable prospects of the state and reception of religion.

The condition and circumstances of the United Provinces, widely differ from those of Germany. Insulated by their limits, their language, their interests, their habits, from the rest of Europe, they admit innovations more tardily, and retain their customs and other principles with more pertinacity or firmness. The Protestant religion in a very simple and salutary form, has long been established in this country. Perhaps, it has a little degenerated from its original constitution, as in any other region of Europe.—There are, indeed, many Roman Catholics in Holland. There is a multitude of Jews in Amsterdam. The Mennonites still are found in considerable numbers, especially at Haerlem. All sects are tolerated: and, from the freedom of the press, books of infidelity, and scepticism have, in former times, often been printed in Holland, which could not find publishers in any other country: But these books were soon scattered to other quarters, and received but little encouragement in the Provinces themselves. It is not the delusion of sophistry, the vices of courts, nor the seductions of poetry, that can be supposed to pervert the Dutch. The temptations which unavoidably attend extensive commerce, and an unceasing pursuit of gain, are asserted to have rather marked the unfavourable features of their character. But, however prevalent these may be among the richer classes, they affect little the great body of the people. Among these are still found many happy effects of a pure religion; much reverence for its doctrines and institutions, and great attention to the right education of their children, and discipline of their families. The clergy display striking examples of Presbyterian simplicity and strictness of manners: They, in general, are learned in the sciences that pertain to their profes-

sion, exemplary in their conduct, regular, and even strict in their attention to their duties, and often zealous in their performance.—From the recent innovations of the French in Holland, the clergy have suffered considerably. In Amsterdam, eight Pastors were driven from their churches, because they refused their oaths to the new constitution, and, to the deep regret of the people, who still seek their ministrations, were supplanted by others, who are regarded with indifference or contempt.

The constitution of the church is Presbyterian; the doctrines are Calvinistic, and are generally taught not nominally, merely, but explicitly; the discipline is strict and regularly exercised. Their mode of worship is like that of the Scots church, simple and primitive, and generally fervent, interesting, and well attended. They, however, admit organs into their churches, of which, that at Haerlem, is reckoned the finest in the world. At Rotterdam they are at present erecting an organ, valued at *l.*20,000 Sterling. Freedoms and levities appear in some towns upon the Sabbath, which once were regarded with abhorrence in Scotland: but which, if suffered to increase, will do more harm there than in Holland; because regarded as a departure from all religion, which is not the sentiment of the Dutch.

The Universities of the United Provinces have been long deemed very pure seminaries of education, highly respectable for learning, piety and discipline, and particularly attentive to those sciences which are connected with theology. They have produced many eminent divines and profound scholars. Classical literature, the oriental languages, biblical criticism, systematic theology, have been cultivated in them with peculiar ardour and success. Theology is the only science which can, with just claims, be taught synthetically. A re-

velation from God, if rightly understood, must be fixed and immutable in its doctrines. The Dutch seem to act upon this principle; and are remarkably steady in their attachment to the creed they profess. Happily for them, that creed is scriptural, simple and sound. Their steadfastness to the religion of their forefathers is wise and safe. In other sciences, which boast no such authority, and are to be studied in a different manner, this unbending disposition might not merit so much praise: as when, in their medical institutions, they will permit no man to be wiser than their countryman Boerhaave, or to contradict his aphorisms.

It is remarkable, that in so small a state, there are no less than five universities, besides inferior colleges, academies, and excellent schools, in every town of note. Of the reformed Calvinistic church, there are 1570 preachers: literature, and the knowledge of religion, are thus very generally diffused. Their elements, principles, and forms, are rigidly exacted of the young, and respected with seeming reverence by all ages. Some intelligent and devout christians who reside in the country, affirm that, as the Dutch are singularly cleanly in their mode of life, yet often very indelicate in their actions: so while they are rigidly attentive to the form, they are often sadly estranged from the power of godliness. This, however, is a censure, that unhappily may be applied to every country where the institutions of religion have been introduced, and long familiar. But contemptible as mere forms are in themselves, they are yet highly useful in human society, and even in the church of Christ. And where the forms are in themselves good, many substantial advantages may flow from their observance; though, from the infirmities of human nature, they are ever liable to be abused. But God even connects his blessing with the ex-

ternal ordinances and means of grace, which he prescribes. It may be trusted, that they are not so frequently separated in Holland.

The religious institutions of the Protestent cantons of Switzerland, are similar to those of Holland. Their admired simplicity of manners and purity of principles, were represented, as having suffered melancholy abatements, even before the late convulsions which have distracted that unhappy country. Still the impressions of the good seed sown, and advantages formerly possessed, are not effaced, and amidst their mountains are yet found examples of primitive piety, discipline and zeal.

From the most recent accounts, the aspect of religion in Denmark and Sweden, as in Germany, is more favourable, than at some former periods. Though French manners and philosophy had tainted the higher ranks in Sweden and Denmark, the luxury and temptations, incident to similar stations, had fostered their concomitant vices; these had never infected to any extent, the great body of the people. The established religion in both kingdoms is Lutheran, with some shades of distinction, chiefly in the power, titles, and distribution of the clergy. Manners, schools, discipline, the poor, are under salutary regulations, and the happy effects and principles of the Reformation, are still zealously retained. In Lapland and Finland there still prevails a melancholy gloom of almost inaccessible heathenism: But, in the other provinces, the Protestant faith, and truths of the Gospel, are attended with conspicuous and invaluable advantages.

Minds that are narrow, bigoted to the forms of their own church, or actuated by zeal, not according to knowledge, are prone to deny all merit or utility to institutions that differ from their own, to condemn such national establishments, or to limit

by their own prejudices, the councils of God, and the features of holiness. Enlightened and benevolent Christians will ever derive satisfaction from viewing the diffusion and effects of pure religion, whatever be its form; and, like Paul, "every "way, whether in pretence or in truth, Christ is "preached, therein they do rejoice, and will re-"joice."

The advantages, and almost indispensible necessity of national establishments in the countries that profess Christianity, will strikingly appear, from the state and circumstances of the Northern kingdoms of Europe. Independently of all considerations of superior utility, which may arise from a well educated clergy, according creeds, uniform discipline, civil protection, and regular instruction, what would be the state of religion in countries that are poor and thinly peopled, if no stated teachers were provided by a national, or liberal and extended plan of support?—It has been generally found, that innovators in forms of religion, leaders of sects, and founders of parties, ever direct their chief attention to rich and populous cities, affluent districts, or scenes where they may obtain power and followers, though it should even be where, according to their professed tenets, their labours can least be required. But who, with such tempers, would devote himself to labour as a teacher in the bleak wilds of Sweden and Norway, or even among the mountains and islands of Scotland? Devout and zealous characters might undertake the task, if no knowledge of truth were already diffused in these regions before them, like the Apostolical spirits, who first were enabled to convert these nations to Christianity. But though, from the inherent imperfections of all human institutions, and the degenerating propensities of men, even in things which are divine, establishments are liable to abuse and to decay, and very unfit

teachers sometimes usurp the ministerial office under their sanction;—still when, by the good providence of God, such extensive means of religious instruction and light are introduced, acknowledged, and productive of so much undeniable good, in regions which otherwise would be sunk in darkness and neglect, let Christians again be thankful and rejoice. Let them bless God that the regular institutions of the Protestant churches, even with all their defects, are yet permitted to be the instruments of so much good: and let them pray with renewed ardour, that their zeal may be revived, their worship purified from adventitious defects, and their labours still more extensively successful.

DEATH OF MRS. KEITH.

Extracted from a Letter to the Publisher.

A GREAT and afflictive change has lately taken place in my situation.—My dear Mrs. Keith, after being confined by sickness to her chamber, from the time of our returning home, (Dec. 2,) at length sunk under her disease, a nervous consumption, and has departed to that happy world, where the inhabitants shall no more say, "I am sick." For several of the last months of her illness, she was so graciously favoured with a strong and steadfast faith in her redeemer, and a lively hope of that eternal life, which, in and through him, God has promised to believers, that she felt herself, in an extraordinary manner, weaned from her dearest friends on earth and from all terrestrial things, and ardently longed for the *blessed hour* of her dissolution, as she called it, that she might be with her Saviour and her God; for then, said she, "I shall be happy—happy—happy."—Early on the Lord's day morning, May 15th, she left me and her other bereaved connections and friends, in the

house of mourning here, and entered triumphantly upon that everlasting Sabbath, which is celebrated by the spirits of the just made perfect in glory. Few, perhaps, ever realized more fully the import of those expressive words of the pious Watt's—

> " Jesus can make a dying bed,
> Feel soft as downy pillows are,
> While on his breast I lean my head,
> And breath my life out sweetly there."..... H. 31, B. 2.

Oh ! may that grace which was so exceedingly abundant towards her, be found sufficient for me also, in its supporting, comforting and sanctifying efficacy.

HANNAH MORE.—An Extract.

A WRITER has appeared, who was born for the age in which she lives. Her sphere of life has been large, and her means of observation various. These advantages of condition she has improved by talents, which were capable of any attainments, and by piety, which gave them an useful direction. With these qualifications she lectured her sex, in language which united the devotion of the scripture with the amenity of the classics ; what estimation she enjoys among her own sex, I know not ; but she has certainly been treated with little courtesy by the other. Periodical publications have vented against her the foulest abuse ; and aspersed her reputation with every calumny, that ignorance, jealousy, and malignity could suggest. They have opened a monthly arena, and invited combatants of every description to assault a woman, whose faults are the incidents of zeal, whose merits are the atchievments of virtue—a woman, who, in the extensive range which her writings have taken, has done more towards rectifying the public opinion, and removing prejudices against religion

and good government, than all the self-constituted anti-jacobins in the kingdom. The clamour against her has now subsided; and as the greater part of those who raised it, have worn the mask, they will have no temptation to lay it aside. Already the name of More is connected with every valuable species of commendation. The calumny of anonymous libellers, and the eulogy of a virtuous prelate, will equally transmit her to the affection of posterity, as the condescending enlightener of the poor, the accomplished instructress of her sex, and the indefatigable benefactress of mankind.

Letter from the Hon. MOSES ROBINSON, to the Publisher, dated,

BENNINGTON, *August* 1, 1803.

DEAR SIR,

THE work of God in this place has been wonderful, more particularly in relation to the broken situation we were in. At the time it began there had been discord and alienation of affection for some time between the Pastor and the Church, and the Church also were divided among themselves, and but little, if any, of the spirit of the gospel prevailed among us. A council was called, and they advised a dismission of the Pastor, doubtless because they considered his usefulness at an end with us: for a litle space we were destitute of preaching, yet the people met, but the members of the Church were not united in love as they ought to have been, many of the congregation cared but little whether there was any public worship or not; but there were some among us whose hearts lamented and mourned the great declension of religion, and did fear least God should leave them to be given over to a hard heart and a blind mind, and used every means to stir up their brethren to the duty of prayer, seeking God with all their hearts, and for two or three months were generally favoured

with preaching; some appeared to be a little awakened to see their danger, and one or two were, we trust, converted. At this time, being about the first of September, 1802, we sent to Mr. James Davis, a zealous and faithful minister, who came and preached and laboured incessantly, going from house to house. It soon appeared a great alteration for the better was taking place, for although at first, there were many that felt grieved with their brethren on account of what had taken place between them and Mr. Swift, their former Pastor, yet it pleased God to send his spirit, and to remove those bitter feelings, and to unite them together in love and a spirit of prayer, to cry to God for the salvation of souls. At this time they united in a day of Fasting and Prayer—this seemed to make them wholly engaged in the grand cause of benevolence, the glory of God, and the salvation of sinners.

Many were under strong conviction of sin, and some brought into the liberty of the gospel from time to time, the work progressed, notwithstanding all the opposition that was made by the enemies of religion, whose number were as yet considerable, but not by any professors. At this time the neighbouring ministers began to give assistance, by preaching and praying, exhorting and conversing with those under conviction, and in the administration of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, at which time considerable numbers joined the Church; this had a desirable effect upon the whole congregation present, and the work of God spread in almost every part of the town; meetings as often as every day in the week, including the evenings, for religious worship. About this time, being the 1st February, Mr. Spaulding arrived, and was truly engaged in preaching the word, and other exercises with Mr. Davis, who had been indefatigable in the work, and the Lord seemed to

pour down the influences of his holy spirit wonderfully, giving to the leading members of the church and others of the children of God, a spirit of prayer, and many were brought into the kingdom, as we trust—the children of God cordially united together in the unity of the spirit, and bonds of peace and love. A number of the first characters were taken from the polite world, and are, we trust, real friends to God, and continue to desire and long after more perfect conformity and obedience to the law of God, admiring the soverign mercy of God, in Christ, towards them. Many aged persons and small children were brought into the kingdom. The work has been on the decline for nearly two months, yet there are some under strong conviction, and some few lately converted. There are at this time evident tokens of the divine presence with us. There have been received into the church, and stand propounded to join in future, a little more than one hundred persons. There have been two considerable reformations and times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord in this place since its first establishment, which I have been a witness to before this, but I think this to be the most solemn, and attended with less false zeal, not according to knowledge, than any one before, and the work greater and more universal. We believe it to be the Lord's work, and it is marvelous in our eyes, to his name alone be all the praise.

I am, dear Sir, your's cordially.

MOSES ROBINSON.

Letter from Mr. CAREY, Baptist Missionary at Bengal, to a Clergyman in this city, dated,

CALCUTTA, *March* 3, 1803.

VERY DEAR SIR,

I AM much, very much obliged by the receipt

of your favour, which was brought me by our dear brother Chamberlaine; his arrival gladdened our spirits, and we were not a little encouraged by the letters which he brought from, and the accounts which he gave us, concerning America. May the glorious work there began be long continued; and may the union between the Churches of different denominations be perfected.

I think it may be always expected that a great down pouring of the spirit will be attended with a correspondent love among good men of all denominations; and that in proportion as the hearts of men are effected with a sense of the vast importance of the things of God, the imaginary importance of their own peculiarities, must be diminished; now, as many of these are from local causes, such as education, habit, the peculiar tincture of that society among whom our lot is cast, and a variety of similar circumstances, it is not unreasonable to suppose that these considerations should give way when more important ones come in view; I am much deceived if I have not found myself to be influenced by such things, and I hope that they appear more and more to be unimportant, in proportion to their want of foundation in the bible.

I do not by this mean to undervalue any doctrine of the gospel, or any opinions or practice founded, or supposed to be founded, on the word of God; for so long as a conscientious person supposes any doctrine or practice to have its warrant there, he cannot be indifferent to it, nor indeed ought he. But as religious differences are not founded upon the Bible, and only on our misconceptions of it, it is highly probable that in a work like that in America, where personal considerations are swallowed up by the most interesting views of divine truth, those distinctions will in a great measure vanish.

In writing a number of letters, about the same time, several things will be repeated, or the same

thing written to several persons: thus I have written an account of the great work of God on the Coast, near Cape Camarin, to several persons in America. I think when the last accounts came away there had been near 4000 persons baptized there in the space of a few months. About 1000, more or less, by Mr. Gericke, and 2700 by the native ministers. These have all rejected Heathenism, demolished their idols, and fitted up the temples for Christian worship. Here I trust the work is going on, tho' slowly. We have baptized sixteen natives, and more are enquiring after the way of truth; one of these was a Brahman. We have also lately opened a place for worship in this city—I yesterday preached in it in Bengalee to a good congregation of natives, and to day in English to an encouraging number. The attempt is in its infancy, but I have great hopes that the Lord will bless it.

I hope you will continue your correspondence with me. I know that my letters are unimportant, and often trifling; but they convey the feelings of a heart which delights in the friendship of good men, and will be more or less profitable and gratifying, according to the concurrence of events, and the state of my mind when I write. I wrote to you some time ago by our much respected friend capt. Hague, I hope that he is arrived safe, and by this time thinking of another voyage to these parts.

My very dear friend, may mercy and truth preserve you. I hope you will never forget to bear on your heart, at a throne of grace, the remembrance of

Your affectionate friend,

W. CAREY.

Calcutta, 3d March, 1803.